

# Moccasin Track News

Volume 5 Issue 1

January-February 2010

Official Publication of the Georgia Chapter of the Trail of Tears Association

## *From the GATOTA President*

I hope everyone had a Merry Christmas and happy holidays. We have a lot of work ahead of us as we head into a new decade, and we'll need everyone's help to get it all done!

Projects in the works include getting more sites certified in Georgia and added to the Trail of Tears National Historic Trail, getting our archaeological project completed for Georgia fort sites, completing sign plans for the Old Federal Road and the Cedartown Road, and putting up interpretation at the newly-certified Cedartown removal camp site.

Doug Mabry, Patsy Edgar, and I met with Cedartown city representatives Wednesday, Dec. 16, to discuss the future development interpretation of the Big Spring park in Cedartown. Representing the city were Charles D. Akridge, city manager, and the director of public works, and one other city employee. Cindy Haygood, RC&D Coordinator for the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service was also present.

Mr. Akridge said the city commission has indicated to him that it is fully supportive of this project, and that they want to "do it right." The city supports the full completion of the site plan developed by Steve Burns, landscape architect for the National Park Service.

That site plan would include four wayside exhibits, which the city supports. I presented him with the wording that Dr. Sarah Hill had developed earlier this year, which has been vetted by Georgia TOTA board members and the National Park Service.

The city also supports placing "original route" signs along the Cave Spring Road corridor. GA TOTA is currently developing a sign plan for this. The city assured us that it could place signs all the way to the Floyd County line, and that city and county crews could install those signs as we direct them. City crews will also install the four wayside exhibits at the park.

The city will commit to making the park handicapped-accessible. The city may be able to use SPLOST funds for the walkway. This will be brought up at the next city commission meeting in January.

Here is the final wording for the text panels on the four wayside exhibits, to the best of my knowledge:

**Cedartown Site-Specific Wayside Panel (Proposed):** The 1838 Removal of the Cedar Town Cherokees Sarah Hill:  
May 14, 2009

*The soldiers gathered them up, all up, and put them in camps. They hunted them and ran them down until they got all of them. Even before they were loaded into wagons, many of them got sick and died. They were all grief stricken. They lost all on earth they had.* --Cherokee descendant Elizabeth Watts, April 27, 1937

You are on the site of the 1838 Cedar Town Camp, the southernmost military post established for the forced removal of the Cherokee Indians from Georgia. More than 200 Cherokees once lived along these waterways. In 1838, they were driven out by state militia volunteers who had been mustered into the U.S. Army. In April, the post quartermaster brought supplies and equipment here, and on May 24th, Isaac Vincent's company of 80 men arrived to set up the camp. Two days later, they started rounding up all Cherokees (*continued page 3*)

## **Locations for 2010 Meetings: (tentative)** mark your calendars

January 9<sup>th</sup> – Vann House, Chatsworth Georgia

Guest Speaker Michael Wren will talk about the Methodists in the Cherokee Nation

March 13<sup>th</sup> – Indian Springs Hotel, Flovilla Georgia

Guest Speaker Dr. Barbara Kawulich, U of West Georgia professor will speak on the Creek Indians

May 8<sup>th</sup> – New Echota, Calhoun Georgia

Speaker TBA

July 10<sup>th</sup> – TBA

September 11<sup>th</sup> – Cedartown

Speaker President Jeff Bishop will bring everyone up to date on our premier project for the wayside exhibit on Cedartown Creek removal camp.

November 13<sup>th</sup> – Funk Heritage Center, Waleska Georgia

American Indian Heritage month - report on Fort Buffington. Report by Cherokee County Historical Society President Stephanie Joyner and Archaeologist Erin Andrews.

## **Georgia Chapter of the Trail of Tears Association**

*Minutes – November 14, 2009*

### **Meeting at the Historic Marsh House, LaFayette, Georgia**

The meeting started at 10:35 AM with a welcome to the Marsh House from Evelle Dana, President of the Marsh House Task Force. Dr. David Boyle, Vice-President of the Walker County Historical Society, followed with a brief history of the Marsh House and Ft. Cumming, a Cherokee removal site located in LaFayette. There were about 50 attendees including 20 visitors.

#### *Business Meeting*

President Jeff Bishop began the business meeting with more information about Ft. Cumming. He said that archaeological work would begin soon on the site under the direction of Erin Andrews Drake. As part of the Omnibus Public Lands Bill signed into law on March 30, 2009, the Trail of Tears National Historic Trail was nearly doubled in size; part of the expansion included removal sites and routes in Georgia. This cleared the way for Camp Cedar Town to become a certified site on the TOTNHT on November 9, 2009. Jeff said that our primary goal now will be to get more sites certified, including Ft. Cumming and other removal forts and camps.

Jeff also talked about some of the other projects being worked on by GA TOTA: the effort to save the Gaines Loop Road house, a Cherokee home site; signage for the Old Federal Road; and signage for the historic road from Cedartown to Cave Spring.

Secretary Linda Baker announced the results of the 2009 election. There were 46 ballots returned; there were no additional nominees and there were no write-ins. The current officers will each serve an additional term which is 2 years for President and Vice-President and 3 years for the Secretary and Treasurer. Thank you to all who took the time to vote!

Linda also showed the two prints of paintings by Cherokee artist Billy Mack Steele which he has given permission for us to use for fundraising.

Vice-President Leslie Thomas announced another fundraising venture which is the publication of historian Charles Walker's books. Rev. Walker wrote and illustrated several books containing the Cherokee history of Georgia and has given us permission to publish and sell the books with proceeds going to the Georgia Chapter. We are very grateful to Rev. Walker and Mr. Steele for their generosity.

The next GA TOTA meeting will be on January 9, 2010 at the Chief Vann House in Chatsworth. The speaker will be Bill Frazier, expert on Native American fish traps. Leslie found out recently that fish traps in Gilmer County were being destroyed; she made phone calls to county officials explaining the historic nature of the rock formations and prevented further traps from being destroyed.

Treasurer Linda Geiger asked for volunteers to help decorate the print shop at New Echota State Historic Site for their annual Christmas Candlelight Tour on December 5th.

Archives Chair Doug Mabry spoke about his involvement with tourism development along Hwy. 27. He said that the abundant Cherokee and Creek history along this route also needs to be interpreted as part of the tourism effort.

Linda Fletcher announced that the Trail of Lights Tour would take place at Red Clay Historic Site on December 19, 2009.

Jeff announced that in 2010 there will be another round of cuts to the state budget. He urged everyone to contact their state senators and representatives and tell them that our historic state parks should not suffer any further cuts!

Jeff then introduced Norma Hornack who is a professional storyteller and puppeteer. Norma and Riki Bond were dressed in period clothing and acted out a story about Ninatoya, a Cherokee girl who worked for the Marsh family prior to removal. Norma also performed a puppet show interpreting the Seneca Indian creation story called "World on the Turtle's Back."

Door prizes were given out and the meeting ended at 12:05 PM. The Marsh House docents, who were also dressed in period clothing, then gave us a wonderful room by room tour of this beautiful house. In addition to Ms. Dana and Dr. Boyle, the other docents were Mary Smitherman, Events Coordinator for the Marsh House, Don Coleman, Public Relations, and Janice Fortune, History Chair. Ms. Fortune's husband is a descendant of the Marsh family.

Lunch and a Board meeting followed at Don Lolo's restaurant in LaFayette.

Respectfully submitted,  
Linda Baker, Secretary

(continued from page 1)

who lived within 10 miles. Day after day they captured Cherokees until they had 217 men, women, and children. The prisoners were fed army rations of bacon and hard bread. Some Cherokees were so sick the company had to build a makeshift hospital for them. In June, a company detachment marched all the prisoners who could walk to a fort at New Echota and then on to deportation camps in Tennessee. A few days later, the remaining soldiers put the sick and elderly Cherokees into army wagons and sent them to the Tennessee camps. All Cherokees were taken from the Cedar Town area in less than a month. In late June, Vincent's company broke camp and mustered out of military service. No traces remained of the roundup of Cherokees from their homes around Cedar Town.

**Context Panel (Proposed) for use at Cedartown and other sites:**

*"The soldiers came and took us from home. They first surrounded our house and they took the mare while we were at work in the fields and they drove us out of doors and did not permit us to take anything with us, not even a second change of clothes, only the clothes we had on, and they shut the doors after they turned us out. They would not permit any of us to enter the house to get any clothing but drove us off. They marched us to Ross' Landing, and still on foot, even our little children, and they sent us off." --Oo-loo-cha, widow of Sweet Water, 1842* The Cherokee Nation once spread across parts of Georgia, North Carolina, Tennessee, and Alabama and was home to many thousands of men, women, and children. In the early 1800s, the federal and state governments came to believe the Cherokees would be better off living beyond the Mississippi River. After years of trying, the federal government managed to get a small group of Cherokee leaders to sign a treaty selling their nation's homeland and agreeing to move to present-day Oklahoma. Most Cherokees, including the National Council, deeply opposed the treaty and refused to go. In the spring of 1838, soldiers established forts and camps all across the Cherokee homeland and swiftly rounded up everyone they could find in the Cherokee Nation. Captured Cherokees were sent to holding camps in Tennessee and Alabama to await deportation. Suffering from exposure, disease epidemics, inadequate sanitation, and heartbreak, the Cherokees remained prisoners in the camps until their final removal to the west. Their agonizing experience is known as the Trail of Tears.

**Site-Specific Wayside: Life in Camp (Proposed)** Sarah Hill: April 25, 2009

The 84 soldiers and their 217 Cherokee prisoners in the Cedar Town Camp ate the same military rations two times a day. In Capt. Vincent's company, each man cooked his own meal in a skillet over a camp fire and ate it from his mess pan. The army did not provide equipment for the Cherokees, who cooked with any container they had been able to gather up when they were arrested. The supply wagon that arrived at the Camp in late May, 1838, brought enough rations for the soldiers and all the captive Cherokee men, women and children. There were barrels with bacon, hard bread, flour, coffee and sugar. Soldiers were given candles for light at night and soap to wash themselves and their gear, but the Cherokees had neither. The army provided each soldier with a canvas tent, but there were no tents for the Cherokees. The soldiers and their Cherokee prisoners lived side by side here at the Cedar Town Camp for more than two weeks.

**Site-Specific Wayside: Leaving Home (Proposed)** Sarah Hill: April 25, 2009

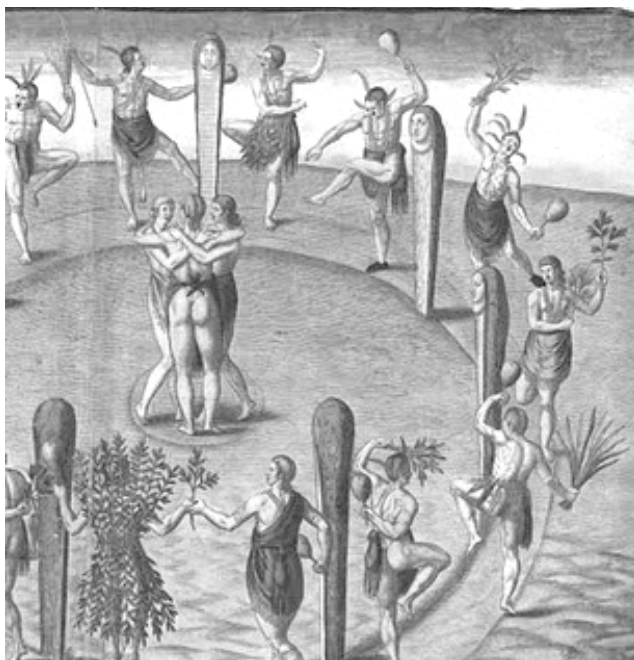
The Cherokees who once lived in the Cedar Town area were forced to abandon their homes, furniture, clothing, livestock, food, tools and agricultural fields. Like their white neighbors, they made their homes in log cabins with wood they had cut from the forests. Women kept vegetable gardens and helped men plant and harvest corn from the fields. They cooked in kitchens built behind their cabins and stored surplus food in corn cribs and potato houses. Nearly every Cherokee farm included an orchard of peach and apple trees. They raised pigs and chickens that they sometimes sold at local markets. Many local Cherokees owned horses and kept them in stables they built near their cabins. They used the abundant water in the Cedar Town area and constructed mills to grind corn into cornmeal. Leaving home against their will, the Cherokees had to give up almost everything they had built, raised, cultivated and cared for.

We look forward to getting these long-delayed signs up at last! Thank you to everyone for your patience and your support. This will be just one example of the kinds of projects we can use to tell the story of the Cherokee Removal in Georgia. But it will take all of us working together to make it a reality.

Jeff Bishop

## Happy New Year

<http://trailofthetrail.blogspot.com/2010/01/new-beginnings.html> From our TOT blogspot.



New Year's Day is often seen as a chance to start over, to wipe the slate clean. For Southeastern Native Americans, that time would have been the Busk, or Green Corn Ceremony, which occurred in July or August. For the Indians, this event ushered in the new year.

"That is the ceremony that is going to re-balance the world," explained Julia Coates, teacher of the Cherokee Nation history course. "Symbolically it will wipe away all transgressions -- the old will be brought out, the new will be brought in."

This was especially important for anyone who had broken a law -- even a transgression as serious as murder. After the Green Corn Ceremony, there could be no punishment or retaliation.

"Essentially, after the Green Corn Ceremony, it's over," said Coates. "Once that ceremony has taken place, someone who has broken the law can go back to his family and nobody will touch him. That's it. Because the whole thing has been re-balanced already by this major, major ceremony."

Anthropologist James Mooney records in *Myths of the Cherokee* that the renewal of the sacred fire was an essential part of the Cherokee Green Corn Dance:

One man, called the Firekeeper, stayed always in the townhouse to feed and tend the fire. When there was to be a dance or a council, he pushed long stalks of *atsil sun ti* (fleabane), "the fire maker" down through the opening in the cedar log to the fire at

the bottom. He left the ends of the stalks sticking out and piled lichens and punk around, after which he prayed, and as he prayed, the fire climbed up along the stalks until it caught the punk. Then he put on wood, and by the time the dancers were ready there was a large fire blazing in the townhouse. After the dance he covered the hole over again with ashes, but the fire was always smoldering below. Just before the Green corn dance, in the old times, every fire in the settlement was extinguished and all the people came and got new fire from the townhouse. This was called *atsi'la galunkw it'yu* "the honored or sacred fire." Sometimes when the fire in a house went out, the woman came to the Firekeeper, who made a new fire by rubbing an *ihya'ga* stalk against the under side of a hard dry fungus that grows along locust trees.

One dance in the Green Corn Ceremony was known as the Groundhog Dance. Mooney tells of its mythical origin:

Seven wolves once caught a Groundhog and said, "Now we'll kill you and have something good to eat." But the Groundhog said, "When we find good food we must rejoice over it, as people do in the Green-corn dance. I know you mean to kill me and I can't help myself, but if you want to dance I'll sing for you. This is a new dance entirely. I'll lean up against seven trees in turn and you will dance out and then turn and come back, as I give the signal, and at the last turn you may kill me."

The wolves were very hungry, but they wanted to learn the new dance, so they told him to go ahead. The Groundhog leaned up against a tree and began the song, *Ha'wiy'ëhì*, and all the wolves danced out in front, until he gave the signal, *Yu!* and began with *Ha'wiy'ëhì*, when they turned and danced back in line. "That's fine," said the Groundhog, and went over to the next tree and started the second song. The wolves danced, out and then turned at the signal and danced back again. "That's very fine," said the Groundhog, and went over to another tree and started the third song. The wolves danced their best and the ....

**For more please visit the blogspot.**

**Please NOTE:**

*At the January 9, 2010 meeting, all GA TOTA members will have the opportunity to vote on the new Chapter bylaws. The previous bylaws were revised to more closely resemble the way we operate at this time. National TOTA had also requested certain changes to the bylaws. Your Board has reviewed the new Bylaws and they have also been approved by the National TOTA Board of Directors.*

*The new Bylaws have been mailed to those without email access also can be found posted on the GA Chapter website [www.gatrailoftears.org](http://www.gatrailoftears.org). Click on the heading TOTABase, enter your user name and password. Under the heading Research Guides, click on bylaws. If you have any questions or comments, please contact Linda Baker, Secretary, at [badnil@windstream.net](mailto:badnil@windstream.net)*

**Events of Interest:**

***Smithgall Woods*** – January 16 – 10a.m. – 12p.m. *Bee Keeping*

*Learn about basic bee keeping and how to start a hive. Berry Wright has been a professional honey producer for 45 years. Berry will discuss assembling equipment and installation of bees. A trip to the apiary will be included, weather permitting. \$5 plus \$5 parking. 706-878-3087.*

January 23 – 9a.m.-5p.m. *Making a Dulcimer*

*Assemble, sand and finish an all-wood Appalachian dulcimer with dulcimer maker and musician Bob Thomason. All tools and supplies are provided. No woodworking experience is required. Bob Thomason has been making and playing fine Appalachian dulcimers since 1981. Register by January 8. \$85 plus \$5 parking. 706-878-3087.*

January 30 – 9a.m.-5p.m. *Flute Making*

*Make a traditional southeastern style Native American flute with award winning Cherokee artist and musician, Danny Bigay. Danny's flutes and art are displayed in museums throughout the country including the Eiteljorg and Five Civilized Tribes Museums. \$150 plus \$5 parking. 706-878-3087.*

As always, we support our Georgia State Park System. Become a park supporter by joining a Friends' group and get a free park pass. Visit the website at <http://www.gastateparks.org/> at your

local library if you don't have a home computer. Buy an annual park pass to save money on parking fees if you can't volunteer - call 770-389-7401. Visit the parks for hiking and camping trips. Volunteer to help during park events – help keep our parks open.



***GATOTA January 9, 2010 Meeting***

The next meeting of the Georgia Chapter of the Trail of Tears Association will be held at the Chief Vann House in Chatsworth, GA on Saturday, January 9, 2010 at 10:30 AM. Michael Wren will present a program on the Methodists in the Indian Nations. Following the meeting, attendees will have the opportunity to tour the house and grounds. If you would like to bring a picnic lunch, there is a picnic area not too far from the Vann House. Please come to our meeting on Jan. 9th and learn more about the Chief Vann House and the projects currently being worked on by the Trail of Tears Association. Our meetings are free and open to the public. You need not have Native American ancestry, just an interest and desire to learn more about this fascinating and tragic event. The Chief Vann House is located west of Chatsworth at the intersection of Georgia Hwys. 225 and 52-A. This is northeast of Calhoun and almost due east of Dalton. The phone number for the Chief Vann House is 706-695-2598. For more information about the Trail of Tears Association, visit the National website at [www.nationaltota.org](http://www.nationaltota.org), the Georgia website at [www.gatrailoftears.org](http://www.gatrailoftears.org) or contact Linda Baker at 770-704-6338 or at [badnil@windstream.net](mailto:badnil@windstream.net). You can also find out more about Trail of Tears Association activities by visiting our blog at [www.trailofthetrail.blogspot.com](http://www.trailofthetrail.blogspot.com).

**GEORGIA CHAPTER OF  
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*You are receiving this newsletter because you have not indicated you have email computer service. GATOTA has gone green and mails newsletters to new members and those without computer access. If you would like to help us go green, contact :  
Leslie at: aeriehollow@ellijay.com*

**We're on the Web!**

**See us at:**

**gatrailoftears.org**

**Suggested Reading:**

The National Park System website has a new bibliography of suggested reading. Here are just a few of the recommendations.

<http://www.nps.gov/trte/historyculture/bibliography.htm>

Anonymous 1978 "Ross Directed Emigration Detachments." Journal of Cherokee Studies 2 (Summer): 186-87.

Burnett, John G. 1978 "The Cherokee Removal through the Eyes of a Private Soldier." Journal of Cherokee Studies 3 (Summer): 180-85.

Buttrick, Daniel S. 1838-39 Diary. Houghton Library, Harvard University.

Cannon, B. B. 1978 "An Overland Journey to the West (October-December 1837)." Journal of Cherokee Studies 3 (Summer): 166-73.

Deas, Lt. Edward 1978 "Emigrating to the West by Boat (April-May 1838)." Journal of Cherokee Studies 3 (Summer): 158-63.

Foreman, Grant 1932 Indian Removal -The Emigration of the Five Civilized Tribes of Indians. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press.

Hudson, Charles 1976 The Southeastern Indians. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press.